

**LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Henry J. Mroz Central Administration Offices**  
**155 Merrimack Street**  
**Lowell, MA 01852**

**English Language Education Program Guidelines**  
**Grades PreK-12**

**(Revised September 2020)**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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The English Language Education Department would like to acknowledge the 2009 Committee Members for writing the original English Language Education Program Plan for the Lowell Public Schools:

Marianne Bond  
Susan Carmona  
Kristen Eschmann  
Stephen Gervais  
Barbara Hodgson  
Maureen Ward-Nault  
Dr. M. Ingrid Urponen

In addition, the English Language Education Department would like to extend its appreciation to the ESL Lead Teachers for their assistance in reviewing and implementing the program plan and for their advocacy on behalf of English Learners.

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**PREFACE**

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**Federal and State Laws and Regulations**

Federal law (Title VI, Civil Rights Act) requires that any language support program run by a district be designed and implemented to ensure that English Learners (ELs) receive effective and appropriate content instruction at appropriate academic levels. Under federal law, districts may use their discretion in designing their English Language Education Programs (including class size and teacher/student ratio) as long as the program meets this standard.

Chapter 71A of the Massachusetts General Laws (G.L. c. 71A) requires that English Learners be educated in a sheltered English immersion (SEI) program, unless a program waiver is sought for another program model, such as Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE). This requirement applies to all districts that enroll ELs, regardless of the number. Districts should use the following guidelines to plan instructional programs for ELs enrolled in an SEI program, which consists of two components:

- **Sheltered Content Instruction**  
Sheltered content instruction is intended to make instruction in academic content areas, delivered in English, more comprehensible to ELs. Accordingly, students at higher levels of English proficiency (i.e., Levels 3.0, 4.0, and 5.0 on ACCESS) will find this instruction more beneficial and less challenging than those at Levels 1.0 and 2.0.
- **English Language Development (ELD), also called English as a Second Language (ESL) Instruction**  
ELD/ESL instruction addresses the listening, speaking, reading and writing standards contained in the *WIDA ELD Standards/frameworks*. ELD/ESL instruction is designed to help ELs “catch up” to their classmates in academic content by learning English as quickly as possible.

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**PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 71A, DISTRICTS MUST PROMOTE AND SUPPORT THE RAPID ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY BY ELs. THUS, DISTRICTS MUST ENSURE THAT ALL ELs RECEIVE ESL INSTRUCTION CORRESPONDING TO THEIR NEEDS. FOR EXAMPLE, STUDENTS WITH ACCESS SCORES OF LEVELS 1.0, 2.0, AND 3.0 SHOULD RECEIVE PROPORTIONALLY MORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION THAN THOSE AT HIGHER PERFORMANCE LEVELS. THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING REFLECT THE IMPORTANCE OF ESL INSTRUCTION FOR ALL ELs.**

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**Guidelines for English Language Development Instruction and Sheltered Content Instruction and Services**

English Language Development (ELD) instruction also referred to as English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, focuses on listening, speaking, reading and writing standards as outlined in the WIDA ELD Standards. ELD/ESL instruction concentrates on discourse, vocabulary building, mastery of English grammatical structures, and pronunciation. ELD/ESL instruction is essential for ELs to develop and acquire grade-level listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency in academic content areas.

Sheltered content instruction is designed to make academic content, delivered in English, more comprehensible to ELs. Every sheltered content lesson contains explicit language and content objectives to promote the acquisition of English language skills, and at the same time, the acquisition of academic knowledge.

**ALL ENGLISH LEARNERS, INCLUDING THOSE RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES, MUST RECEIVE ELD/ESL INSTRUCTION AND SHELTERED CONTENT INSTRUCTION.**

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English Language Education Program Guidelines (Grades PreK-12)

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s *Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Learners* (August 2016) recommends that school districts provide the following recommended periods of instruction based on ACCESS for ELs results: ELD/ESL instruction, with its own dedicated time and curriculum, is an essential component of any program serving ELs (SEI, TBE, Two-Way Dual Language). G.L. c. 71A, § 1 calls on districts to promote and support the rapid and effective acquisition of English language proficiency by ELs. Thus, ELs must receive ELD/ESL instruction and language support consistent with their needs. For example, *Foundational* students (WIDA Levels 1.0–3.0) should receive proportionally more ELD/ESL instruction than those at higher performance levels. Districts should consider the following guidelines (See Figure A) in determining the allocated time for the ELD/ESL instruction. Kindergarten students who receive a score of *low* or *mid* should be considered at *Foundational* level. **Please note:** Districts may determine whether to group WIDA Level 3.0 students at either the Foundational or Transitional levels depending on student needs.

**Figure A: Recommended Periods of Instruction for ELs Based on ACCESS for ELLs Results (Full-day Kindergarten Through Grade 12)**

ACCESS for ELLs Overall (Composite) Score	Recommended Periods of ESL Instruction
Foundational (ACCESS Levels 1.0 – 2.9)	At least two to three periods (a period is not less than 45 minutes) per day of direct ESL instruction, delivered by a licensed ESL teacher.
Transitional (ACCESS Levels 3.0-4.1)	At least one period (a period is not less than 45 minutes) per day of direct ESL instruction, delivered by a licensed ESL teacher.
Reclassification (ACCESS overall score of Level 4.2 and a Composite Literacy score of Level 3.9)	At least an overall score of 4.2 and a composite literacy score of 3.9 on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 may have acquired enough English language skills to be considered English proficient. These students who demonstrate the ability to perform ordinary class work in English as indicated by one or more of the district’s measures should no longer be classified as ELs. Once reclassified, their progress must be monitored for four years after their EL classification is removed.

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## INTRODUCTION

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Lowell, Massachusetts is considered the “Cradle of the American Industrial Revolution”. The city began to run its textile mills with water power in the 1820s. The Lowell Public Schools established the first public co-educational high school in the country in 1824 to educate the children of its residents and the rapidly growing immigrant population. Today, following its tradition as an educational forerunner, Lowell continues its commitment to meeting the educational needs of all children regardless of their country of birth, national origin, or ethnic background. Approximately 3,600 (25%) of the district’s 14,400 students are English Learners (ELs) who speak over 35 different native languages. As a gateway to academic success and college-readiness, the district offers its ELs explicit, research-based English language development instruction and language support in academic content areas.

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## MISSION

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The English Language Education Department supports the mission of the Lowell Public Schools to ensure excellence in teaching and learning in order to achieve academic results that allow students to:

- Attain their future academic goals
- Be prepared for college and beyond
- Compete in the global marketplace
- And ultimately achieve their dreams of satisfying life.

The mission of the English Language Education (ELE) Program is the same – to engage, challenge, and inspire all ELs to excel and to be prepared for college, career, and citizenship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The ELE Program offers a variety of placement options at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The ELE Program curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts Common Core and the WIDA ELD standards. Instructional strategies in all ELE Program models adhere to research-based second language acquisition pedagogy and best practices that support English language development in listening, speaking, reading, and writing; and academic content learning.

In the spirit of the district’s mission, the ELE Department team, in coordination with the PreK-12 Coordinators of Language and Literacy, Mathematics, and Science and Social Studies, provides the following support and professional development activities to teachers and administrators with a continuum of programs and services to help them meet the district’s and state’s academic expectations for all ELs:

- Consult with teachers and administrators to provide appropriate program and services to ELs.
- Collaborate with classroom teachers to interpret state, local and classroom assessments and help teachers structure English language development instruction to support academic growth.
- Support classroom teachers in determining educational goals and learning outcomes for ELs.
- Meet frequently with teachers to support them with curriculum materials and instruction based on the WIDA ELD standards.
- Conduct research-based professional development activities in ELD/ESL instruction and WIDA ELD standards.
- Provide teachers with information on the emotional and social needs of students, especially students who have experienced interrupted formal education.

To ensure that students receive appropriate academic support, teachers are responsible for:

## English Language Education Program Guidelines (Grades PreK-12)

- Identifying students in need of EL services.
- Providing the required hours of ELD/ESL instruction based on the students' language proficiency level.
- Administering the ACCESS tests.
- Using student performance data to guide instruction.
- Overseeing the MCAS testing for ELs.
- Collaborating with ESL Lead Teacher/Administrator for guidance/support.
- Maintaining records for ELs.
- Providing parents with progress reports.

The ELE Department also works with the Parent/Newcomer Liaisons to provide opportunities for families to learn about the school system and the resources available to support their needs.

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### ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM GOALS

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The primary goal of the ELE Program is to provide a quality, research-based educational program that ensures the success of language minority students in meeting federal, state, and local standards for academic performance. This success ultimately leads to high school graduation and opportunities for continuing education. While the goal of this program is based on the belief that given the appropriate educational tools and time, all students can learn and achieve high levels, the program is also supported by the mandates of the amended Massachusetts G.L.C. 71A and the provisions of No Child Left Behind.

To achieve these goals, the Lowell Public Schools will:

- Identify and place ELs into educational programs according to federal and state regulations that will incorporate the use of WIDA ELD standards that include both English language development instruction and sheltered content instruction.
- Provide a comprehensive ELE Program for its ELs (including Special Education students who are also identified as ELs) that will address the listening, speaking, reading, and writing standards outlined in the WIDA ELD standards.
- Provide its ELs with grade level academic sheltered content instruction that is designed to make content instruction delivered in English more accessible for students at the intermediate or higher level of English language acquisition.
- Align curriculum in all subject areas with the state common core curriculum and WIDA ELD standards for ELs.
- Conduct ongoing assessment of ELs' academic knowledge and English language development to evaluate academic growth, determine appropriate program placement, and comply with state and federal requirements.
- Provide a high-quality program of professional development for all teachers to ensure the consistent, systemic use of effective practices for ELs in both general education and ELD/ESL classrooms. These professional development opportunities specifically target the skills and knowledge identified as needed to deliver sheltered content instruction.
- Provide content-specific professional development for teachers in order to embed effective instructional strategies for ELs into these content classes.
- Ensure consistent and systemic supervision and evaluation of ELE program models.

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### ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

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Under state and federal law, English Learners must be taught the same academic standards and be provided the same opportunities to master such standards as other students (G.L. c. 71A § 7; Equal Educational Opportunities Act, 20 USC § 1703(f); Title III of NCLB § 3102). Furthermore, instruction provided to ELs must be meaningful and appropriate for their individual English language proficiency level.

Lowell Public Schools’ English Language Education (ELE) program and approaches are designed to meet the academic and language development needs of all ELs. The ELE program provides ELs with:

1. systematic, explicit, and sustained development of English as a Second language (ESL) and
2. meaningful participation in the district’s general educational program.

The ELE program is monitored and evaluated using the *Castañeda’s Three-Pronged Test* (established by the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in *Castañeda v. Pickard*<sup>1</sup> ([Appendix K & L](#)), which the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights also use to determine ELE program compliance under the federal EEOA and Title VI laws respectively<sup>2</sup>) to ensure the effectiveness of program development and implementation:

<i><b>Castañeda’s Three-Pronged Test</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The educational theory underlying the language assistance program is recognized as sound by some experts in the field or is considered a legitimate experimental strategy.</li> <li>● The program and practices used by the district are reasonably calculated to implement effectively the educational theory adopted by the district.</li> <li>● The program succeeds when producing results indicating that students’ language barriers are actually being overcome within a reasonable period of time.</li> </ul>

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**ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM MODELS**

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The English Language Education (ELE) Program in PreK-12 consists of three program models designed to support acquisition of English language and academic knowledge. The models are ELD/ESL Newcomer Academy, Intermediate ELD/ESL, and Advanced ELD/ESL. English Learners in grades K-12 are placed into an ELE program based on their English proficiency testing results, educational background, and other pertinent data.

There are three distinct program placements for students based on their initial language assessment results and academic history (See Figure B).

**Figure B. English Language Education Program Models**

<b>English Language Education Program #1: ELD/ESL Newcomer (SLIFE) Program</b>	<b>English Language Education Program #2: Sheltered English Immersion Newcomer (Non SLIFE) Program</b>	<b>English Language Education Program #3: Intermediate/Advanced Sheltered English Immersion Program</b>
<b>Grades 2-12: Proficiency Levels 1.0-2.9</b>  <b>For SLIFE - Student with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education</b>	<b>Grades K-12: Proficiency Levels 1.0-2.9</b>  <b>For Non SLIFE</b>	<b>Grade K: Overall Composite Proficiency Levels 3.0-4.9 and Composite Literacy Proficiency Level 3.0-4.0.</b>

<sup>1</sup> 464 F2d 989 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1981)

<sup>2</sup> See *Dear Colleague Letter* (footnote 1).



English Language Education Program Guidelines (Grades PreK-12)

		<b>Grades 1-12: Overall Composite Proficiency Levels 3.0-4.4 and Composite Literacy Proficiency Levels 3.0-4.4.</b>
Curriculum: ESL/ELD + SEI Content	Curriculum: ESL/ELD + SEI Content	Curriculum: ESL/ELD + SEI Content
Serviced by: ESL Licensed Teacher/ESL Licensed Tutor and SEI Endorsed Content Teachers	Serviced by: ESL Licensed Teacher/ESL Licensed Tutor and SEI Endorsed Content Teachers	Serviced by: ESL Licensed Teacher/ESL Licensed Tutor and SEI Endorsed Content Teachers
<p><b>SLIFE (Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education) ELs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend a self-contained newcomer (SLIFE) classroom for at least two to three periods (a period is not less than 45 minutes) per day to receive direct English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, delivered by an ESL licensed teacher. ELs may be integrated for allied arts, lunch, and recess while they are in the Newcomer (SLIFE) Program.</li> <li>Receive explicit content and language instruction.</li> <li>Receive cultural and social emotional support.</li> </ul>	<p><b>NON SLIFE ELs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend an ESL class at least two to three periods (a period is not less than 45 minutes) per day to receive direct ESL instruction, delivered by an ESL licensed teacher.</li> <li>Attend Sheltered content instruction classes, if applicable, in Mathematics, ELA, Social Studies and Science.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate/Advanced ELs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend an ESL class at least one period (a period is not less than 45 minutes) per day to receive direct ESL instruction, delivered by an ESL licensed teacher and/or ESL tutor.</li> <li>Attend Sheltered content instruction classes in Mathematics, ELA, Social Studies and Science.</li> </ul>
ELD/ESL instruction focuses on listening, speaking, reading and writing standards as outlined in the WIDA ELD standards. ELD/ESL instruction focuses on discourse, vocabulary building, mastery of English grammatical structures, and pronunciation. ELD/ESL instruction is essential for ELs to develop and maintain grade-level listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency in academic content areas. Sheltered content instruction is designed to make academic content, delivered in English, more comprehensible to ELs. Every lesson contains explicit language and content objectives to promote the acquisition of English language	ELD/ESL instruction focuses on listening, speaking, reading and writing standards as outlined in the WIDA ELD standards. ELD/ESL instruction focuses on discourse, vocabulary building, mastery of English grammatical structures, and pronunciation. ELD/ESL instruction is essential for ELs to develop and maintain grade-level listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency in academic content areas. Sheltered content instruction is designed to make academic content, delivered in English, more comprehensible to ELs. Every lesson contains explicit language and content objectives to promote the acquisition of English language	ELD/ESL instruction focuses on listening, speaking, reading and writing standards as outlined in the WIDA ELD standards. ELD/ESL instruction focuses on discourse, vocabulary building, mastery of English grammatical structures, and pronunciation. ELD/ESL instruction is essential for ELs to develop and maintain grade-level listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency in academic content areas. Sheltered content instruction is designed to make academic content, delivered in English, more comprehensible to ELs. Every lesson contains explicit language and content objectives to promote the acquisition of

English Language Education Program Guidelines (Grades PreK-12)

<p>skills and, at the same time, the acquisition of academic knowledge. Hours outside of ELD/ESL instruction are available for content instruction and specials.</p> <p><b>All ELs, including students with special needs must receive English Language Development instruction and sheltered content instruction.</b></p> <p><b>ELs may advance to ELE Program #3 once they obtain ACCESS Overall Performance Level 3.0.</b></p>	<p>skills and, at the same time, the acquisition of academic knowledge. Hours outside of ELD/ESL instruction and ELA or reading instruction are available for content instruction and specials.</p> <p><b>All ELs, including students with special needs must receive English Language Development instruction and sheltered content instruction.</b></p> <p><b>ELs may advance to ELE Program #3 once they obtain ACCESS Overall Performance Level 3.0.</b></p>	<p>English language skills and, at the same time, the acquisition of academic knowledge. Hours outside of ELD/ESL instruction and ELA or reading instruction are available for content instruction and specials.</p> <p><b>All ELs, including students with special needs must receive English Language Development instruction and sheltered content instruction.</b></p> <p><b>ELs may be considered for reclassification once they obtain ACCESS Overall Performance Level 4.2 and a composite literacy score of 3.9. Once they are reclassified, their progress must be monitored for four years.</b></p>
<p><b>Preschool Sheltered English Immersion Program (Age 4: Proficiency Levels A-C/Age 5: Proficiency Levels A-D):</b> Your child will receive English language development support necessary to overcome his or her language barriers throughout the duration of his/her preschool program. <b>Please note that your child will be reassessed at the end of preschool to determine his/her eligibility for English Language Education Program in Kindergarten.</b></p>		

In addition to the three English Language Education Program models above, English Language Education Program #4 is also available.

<p><b>English Language Education Program #4: Transitional Bilingual Education (Waiver)</b></p>	<p>The Bilingual Education model is available for ELs who have been waived, provided there are at least 20 students of the same language requesting it. These students are newcomers with WIDA MODEL or ACCESS Levels 1.0-2.9. The Bilingual Education model has a dual-focus in the delivery of academic content in the native language and English language development.</p>
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**IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT, AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURES**

Under federal<sup>3</sup> and state law,<sup>4</sup> Lowell Public Schools must take appropriate steps to identify ELs so they can receive ELD/ESL instruction and subject matter content, and their parents can participate in the decision-making process relative to the type of program the identified EL will receive. When a new student registers for school, it is the Lowell Public Schools' obligation to determine whether the student is an EL by following **appropriate procedures** and to place the student in the appropriate instructional program to support content area and language learning (603 CMR 14.02). In order to ensure that the learning needs of diverse students are met, Lowell Public Schools must begin by appropriately identifying the needs of students.

During registration, a *Home Language Survey and Educational History Form* is completed with a parent/guardian to find out whether a student has been exposed to a language other than English in the student's home and should be assessed for English language proficiency (See Attachments B1 and B2). The *Home Language Survey and Educational History Form* also presents an opportunity to collect other useful information about the student that will help district personnel understand the student's personal and educational history in order to plan an appropriate educational program for the student. If a language other than English is indicated on the form by a parent/guardian, then the student must receive an initial language assessment to determine English language proficiency.

The district's registration and placement procedures apply to newcomers and continuing English Learners (See Figures E and F).

### **A. REGISTRATION AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURES FOR GRADES PREK-8**

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#### **Students New to Lowell Public Schools**

When a new student registers at the Family Resource Center, the enrollment clerks administer and complete the *Home Language Survey and Educational History Form* to determine the need for an English language assessment and placement decisions (See Figures D and E). Students who speak or use a language other than English will be initially screened using the PreIPT (Pre-K), WIDA MODEL (K) or WIDA SCREENER (1-8) (See Figure C). Preschool students with proficiency levels A-D will be recommended English language development support. Students in grades 2-12 with an overall proficiency level below 3.0 and who have limited or interrupted formal education will be placed in the ELD/ESL Newcomer (SLIFE) Program (See Figure B). When students are recommended for the English Language Education Program, the Coordinator of the Family Resource Center will notify parent/guardian in writing about placement and their rights to "opt out" or to secure an SEI program waive in a language the parent can understand, to the extent practical.

#### **Figure C. Initial Identification of English Learners<sup>5</sup>**

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<sup>3</sup> For more information on state educational agency (SEA) and school district obligations to ELs, the Department strongly encourages school officials and interested others to review the joint U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) and U.S. Department of Justice (USDJ) EL policy document entitled *Dear Colleague Letter, English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents (01/7/2015)* (referred to as "Dear Colleague letter" hereafter) at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf>. In preparing this document, the Department has drawn from the *Dear Colleague letter* for discussion of federal law and policy.

<sup>4</sup> 603 CMR 14.02.

<sup>5</sup> [Guidance on the Identification, Assessment, Placement and Reclassification of English Learners \(January 2019\)](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/guidance/default.html?section=guidance) <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/guidance/default.html?section=guidance>

Grades	Test	When	Domains Assessed	Criteria for EL Eligibility	Scores for EL Eligibility
Pre-K	Pre-IPT	Age 4	Listening Speaking	Overall	Levels A—C
Pre-K	Pre-IPT	Age 5	Listening Speaking	Overall	Levels A—D
K	WIDA Model	First Semester	Listening Speaking	Oral proficiency level in Listening	Levels 1.0—4.9
				Oral proficiency level in Speaking	Levels 1.0—4.9
		Second Semester	Listening Speaking Reading Writing	Overall composite proficiency level	Levels 1.0—5.0
				Composite literacy proficiency level	Levels 1.0—4.0
1-12	WIDA Screener		Listening Speaking Reading Writing	Overall composite proficiency level	Levels 1.0—4.4
				Composite literacy proficiency level	Levels 1.0—4.4

**Continuing English Learners**

The LAT reviews the progress of ELs in Grades K-8 and makes program and course recommendations for the following school year. Recommendations are based on available test results (WIDA MODEL/ACCESS scores/levels, MCAS results), on writing samples, and on the student’s actual classroom performance.

**B. REGISTRATION AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURES FOR GRADES 9-12**

**Students New to Lowell Public Schools**

When a new student registers at the Family Resources Center, the enrollment clerk administer and complete the Home *Language Survey and Educational History Form* to determine the need for an English language assessment to make appropriate initial placement decisions (See Figures D and E). Students who speak or use a language other than English will be screened using the WIDA Screener, an initial language assessment test. Students with an overall proficiency level below 4.0 will be recommended for one of the Programs above (See Figure C). Students in grades 9-12 with an overall proficiency level below 3.0 and who have limited or interrupted formal education will be placed in the ELD/ESL Newcomer Program (See Figure C). When students are recommended for the English Language Education Program, the Academic Department Chair of the English Language Education Program will notify parent/guardian in writing about placement and their rights to “opt out” or to secure an SEI program waive in a language the parent can understand, to the extent practical.

**Incoming Grade 9 Students**

Grade 9 students are placed using the following guidelines:

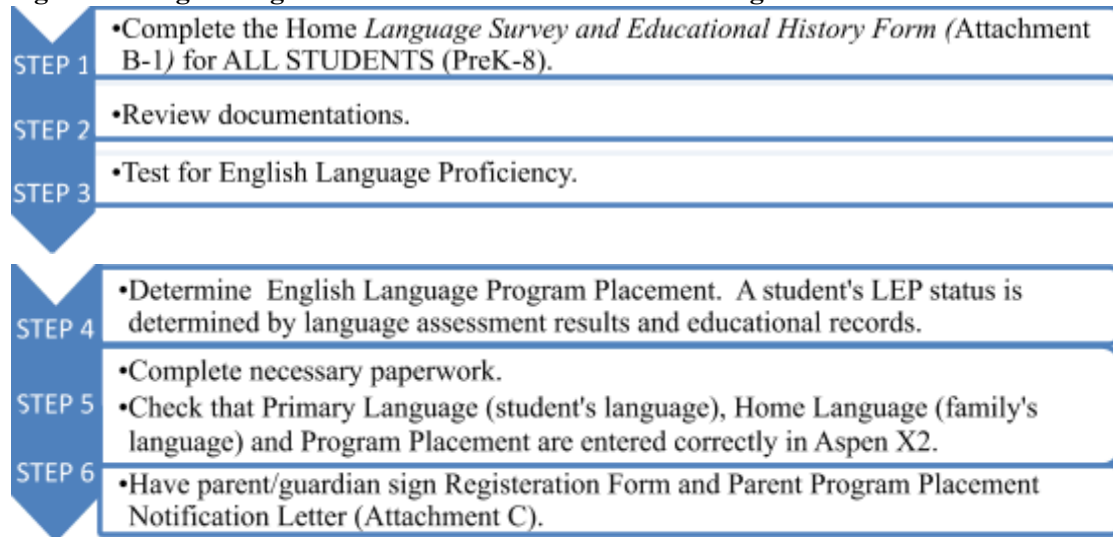
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- Coordination and communication between the Academic Department Chair of the English Language Education Program at the high school and the middle school Guidance Counselors, Instructional Specialists, and teachers.
- Recommendations from middle school ELD/ESL, ELA, and general education content teachers.
- Analysis of student assessment data from the district math placement test, writing samples, MCAS results, WIDA Screener/ACCESS results, and LHS ESL Placement Assessment.
- Coordination and communication between federal and state program facilitators (who support transition to grade nine), guidance personnel, and parents.

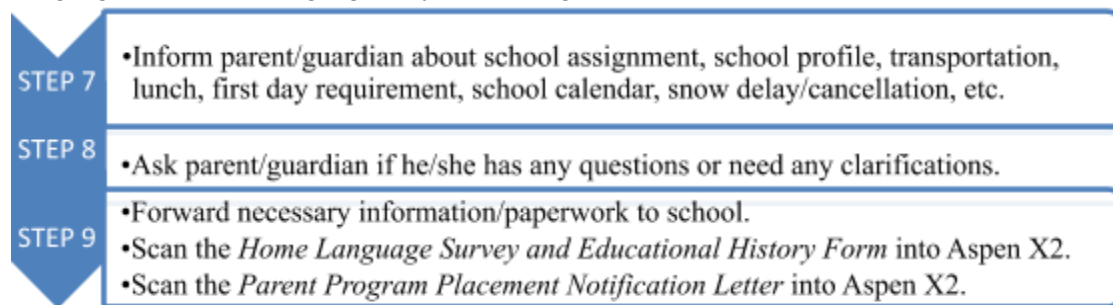
**Continuing English Learners**

The LAT reviews the progress of ELs in Grades 9-12 and makes program and course recommendations for the following school year. Recommendations are based on available test results (WIDA Screener/ACCESS scores/levels, MCAS results, LHS ESL Placement Test), on writing samples, and on the student’s actual classroom performance.

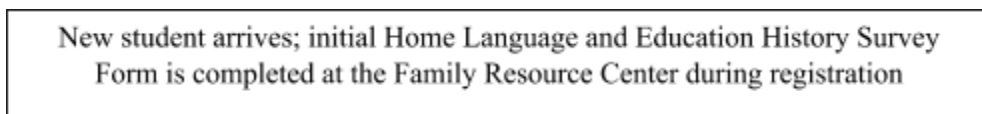
**Figure D. Registering Procedure for New Students Entering Lowell Public Schools**

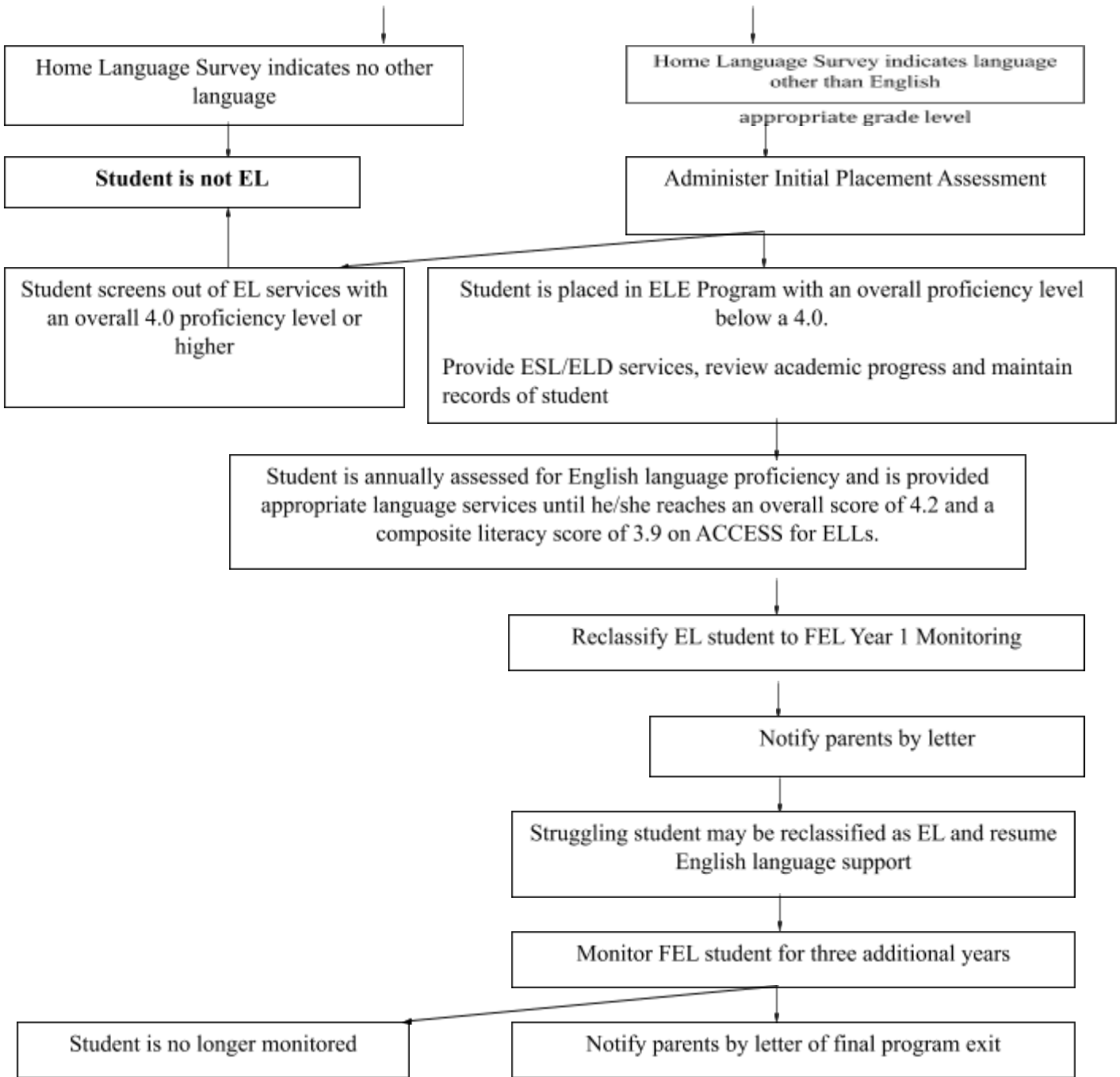


Note: If the student is recommended for any of the English Language Education Program, then his/her Primary Language and Home Language **may not** be English.



**Figure E. Registration and Placement Flowchart**





**NOTE: Parents will receive a welcome packet that will include important information about Lowell Public Schools, and special programs, including description of programs and waivers and opt-out options.**

**Figure F. Schools with ELD/ESL Newcomer (SLIFE) Program**

Zone I	Zone II	Citywide
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English Language Education Program Guidelines (Grades PreK-12)

Pawtucketville Mem Elementary School McAvinnue Elementary School Murkland Elementary School Daley Middle School Stoklosa Middle School Wang Middle School	Greenhalge Elementary School McAuliffe Elementary School Reilly Elementary School Butler Middle School Sullivan Middle School	STEM @ Rogers School Robinson Middle School Lowell High School
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The ELD/ESL Newcomer (SLIFE) Program (See Figure F) is designed mainly for Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) in grades 2-12 who are at proficiency levels 1.0-2.9. These students may lack basic academic skills and concepts, content knowledge, critical thinking skills and may not be literate in their native languages. These students are challenged with adapting to a new environment and culture, learning English, and catching up on content knowledge and skills.

Possible Indicators of SLIFE<sup>6</sup>:

- Enrolled in school after Grade 2
- Has missed at least two years of school
- Is at least two years below grade level in reading and mathematic
- Came to the U.S. as a refugee
- Has inadequate school records, no school records, or school records with gaps
- Has poor attendance records from prior schools, frequent absences, and/or tardiness at current school
- Is pre-literate in the native language
- Has difficulty adjusting to school routines and expectations
- Has limited experiences in content area classes in English
- Performs poorly on standardized tests

Parents or guardians of students identified as EL have the right to waive their child into ELE Program #4, a Transitional Bilingual Education Program and the district offers such a program if 20 or more students of the same grade and language request it.

Annual waivers may be granted based upon parent request, provided that the parent annually visits the school and provides written informed consent. Parents are provided with program descriptions, when possible, in a language they can understand. The waiver process for students under age ten differs from that of students ten years of age and older.

**Students who are under age 10**, may only be granted waivers if (a) the student has been placed in an English language classroom for at least 30 calendar days, (b) the school certifies in no less than 250 words that the student “has special and individual physical or psychological needs, separate from lack of English proficiency” that requires an alternative program, and (c) the waiver is authorized by both the school superintendent and principal.

All waiver requests and school district responses (approved or disapproved waivers) are placed in the student’s permanent school record. For students under age 10, both the superintendent and the principal must authorize the waiver. The waiver is made under guidelines that may, but are not required to, contain an appeals process.

Following the aforementioned state guideline, parents or guardians wishing to waive their child under age ten into a Transitional Bilingual Program need to complete the Waiver Application Form for Students Under 10

<sup>6</sup> For more information on Students with Limited and/or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) read the book entitled *Meeting the Needs of Students with Limited or Interrupted Schooling: A Guide for Educators (2009)* written by Andrea DeCapua, William Smathers, and Lixing Frank Tang.

## English Language Education Program Guidelines (Grades PreK-12)

Years of Age (Attachment D) and submit it together with the Waiver Letter of 250 Words (Attachment E) and the Parent or Guardian Informed Consent Form (Attachment F) to the Family Resource Center.

**Students who are over age 10** may be granted waivers when it is the informed belief of the school principal and educational staff that an alternative program would be better for the student’s overall educational progress. Students receiving waivers may be transferred to other English language education programs.

Parent or guardians wishing to waive their child age ten and older into a Transitional Bilingual Program need to complete the Waiver Application Form for Students 10 Years of Age and Older (Attachment G) and the Parent or Guardian Informed Consent Form (Attachment F) and submit them to the Family Resources Center. Waivers are annually reviewed by school principals and designated staff.

Lowell Public Schools notifies parents or guardians of the waiver placement. If the waivers are not warranted due to insufficient numbers of students or other reasons, the following programs are recommended:

- English Language Education Program #1: ELD/ESL Newcomer (SLIFE) Program
- English Language Education Program #2: Sheltered English Immersion Program
- English Language Education Program #3: Intermediate/Advance ELD/ESL
- English Language Education Program #4: Transitional Bilingual Education (Waiver)

### **Parents are informed of their right to have their child “Opt Out” of an ELE Program.**

After the parent has decided to exercise the right to have their student “opt out” of the ELE Program services in writing (“Opt-Out Form”, Attachment H), the student is placed into general education classes. However, according to State Laws, the district must still provide English language development support, assess the student using state required language assessments, and monitor the student’s progress.

### **Placement of Continuing English Learners**

In early May, the Language Assessment Team (composed of ESL Lead Teacher, classroom teacher(s), school administrator and EL district administrator) reviews the progress and placement of ELs and makes recommendations for the following school year. Recommendations are based on data available in X2, writing samples and on student’s actual classroom performance.

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## SCHOOL-BASED EL IDENTIFICATION AND VERIFICATION

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The Language Assessment Team (LAT) at each school will review students who may not have been identified as EL at the Family Resource Center and may make the recommendation for language assessment.

The LAT consists of any combination of the following members:

- ESL Lead Teacher
- Classroom Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- Guidance Counselor
- School Administrator
- Parent/Guardian
- Student (14 years or older)



Once a student is identified as EL by the assessments at the Family Resource Center and enrolls at a school, additional assessments may take place. In order to have a more accurate picture of the student's language and literacy abilities, a reading and writing sample will be administered at the student's assigned school.

The LAT also periodically reviews second language learners who appear to be unable to do ordinary class work in English without language support.

The LAT will:

- Meet with the school staff to provide information about EL enrollees and EL support services.
- Carry out periodic monitoring for four years after a student is reclassified.
- Make decisions from data about placement in any given program and appropriate EL support.
- Meet on a regular basis to monitor the EL's language and academic progress (grades, student classroom work, assessments, and teacher observations).
- Recommend modification of EL support services or reclassification of a student receiving direct services.
- Continually evaluate the ELE program as a whole.

If a student is determined to be EL by the LAT, the ESL Lead Teacher will make the code change from English proficient (00) to EL (01) with a corresponding change in the program status in the student's record to reflect the student's English language proficiency and program placement in the student management database, Aspen X2. The child's primary language must be a language other than English to be coded as 01. Additionally, the ESL Lead Teacher will verify that the EL status of the reclassified students has been updated from EL (01) to FEL (02).

In September, the ESL Lead Teacher will verify the EL status and the program status of all ELs and all non-ELs in the building in preparation of the October 1 SIMS Report. This procedure ensures that continuing ELs who need to be tested will automatically receive the correct annual testing labels and that non-ELs are coded accurately in Aspen X2.

In December/early January and in May, ESL Lead Teacher will verify the EL status and the program status of all students enrolled after October 1. After verification, the ESL Lead Teacher will change any incorrect codes in the Aspen X2 student management database.

The Aspen X2 procedural guidelines (Understanding EL Codes, Setting EL Codes and Accessing Assessment Data) are included as a separate section at the end of the ELE Program Plan.

## ELD/ESL INSTRUCTION

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The ESL Instruction guidance below is from "Appendix J: ESL Instruction" of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's *Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Learners* (January 2019):

### ESL INSTRUCTION

*The goal of **ESL** instruction is to advance language development and to promote academic achievement. English language proficiency includes **social and academic language** in listening, speaking, reading, and writing<sup>7</sup>. ESL instruction provides systematic, explicit, and sustained language instruction, and prepares*

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<sup>7</sup> WIDA standards 1-5: Social and Instructional Language; the Language of Language Arts; the Language of Mathematics; the Language of Science; the Language of Social Studies

*students for general education by focusing on academic language<sup>8</sup>. Effective ESL instruction supports student success in school, including improvement of ACCESS scores and acceleration of academic achievement. Effective ESL instruction also supports long term goals such as college and career readiness. ESL instruction, with its own dedicated time and curriculum, is a required component of any program serving ELs (SEI, TBE, Two-Way Bilingual, etc.).*

*ESL is its own subject matter. The subject matter knowledge required of ESL teachers is outlined in 603 CMR 7.00. ESL is based on the research, theory, and pedagogy of second language acquisition within the context of the Frameworks. ESL is language driven, but general education content is the vehicle for language development within a sociocultural context. Language forms and functions are taught within rich, contextualized, and meaningful circumstances.*

*Although ESL teachers must be knowledgeable about the academic language across disciplines, they are not expected to be multidisciplinary (Walqui 2014). The ESL teacher cannot be expected to be an expert in all content areas and the full range of their corresponding content-specific academic language practices, just as SEI teachers are not expected to teach the full range of English language development subject matter. Therefore, the ESL teacher should focus on the academic language, academic habits of thinking (i.e. use evidence to support claims, question evidence, etc.), and standards that cut across all content areas. ESL teachers, in collaboration with other content teachers, should continue to develop awareness of the language ELs need to be able to process and produce in mainstream classes to reach high levels of performance. Likewise, general education teachers need to develop awareness and strategies to support the disciplinary language needs of EL students. The language development of EL students is the responsibility of both ESL and general education teachers.*

*Gaining proficiency in the academic language of American schools requires more than linguistic knowledge. Teachers, therefore, must also consider cultural knowledge and ways of being, interacting, negotiating, speaking, listening, reading, and writing as connected to cultural and social roles. Considerations must be made for special populations (examples: newcomers, SLIFE, SPED, long-term ELs, gifted, etc.) For students at the earliest levels of English language proficiency (Newcomers), the curricula must clearly be different, targeting to move students as quickly as possible forward and toward the analytical tasks that are inside of our standards and outlined in the frameworks (Kibler 2014). Furthermore, for students who are just beginning to learn a language, everyday language becomes the basis for academic language. However, teachers must simultaneously guide students towards the skills, knowledge, and academic habits of thinking embedded in the Frameworks. Language forms and functions should still be taught in a contextualized, rich, and meaningful manner. Please see additional guidance for SLIFE and students with disabilities at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/resources.html>.*

*ESL uses multiple forms of assessment to gather evidence of students' achievement towards standards that focus on speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Any other content (science, math, social studies, etc.) that becomes part of a language assessment is incidental, and purely provides the context for language development. For example, a teacher who holds an ESL license can design assessments that measure the academic language of the content areas, but should not be assessing the content of science, math, ELA, or other areas that require their own licenses.*

*Districts have the flexibility to choose the appropriate program model for their EL population (pull-out, push-in, content-based ESL, etc.) if the instructional focus is ESL as evidenced by lesson plans and/or ESL*

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<sup>8</sup> Although research on academic language for ELs in K-12 settings is incomplete, for the purposes of our context we are defining academic language as the language one needs to succeed in general education classrooms. For "A Review of the Literature on Academic English: Implications for K-12 English Language Learners," see [http://www.ceee.gwu.edu/Academic%20Lit%20Review\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ceee.gwu.edu/Academic%20Lit%20Review_FINAL.pdf).

*curriculum. Academic tutoring on content subjects is not a substitute for the ESL component of the SEI programs.*

In 2012, Massachusetts joined the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium. This consortium provides the assessment tools that are used for English language proficiency assessment. Along with the adoption of the assessments, Massachusetts also adopted language proficiency standards that are aligned to the assessments. For further information, go to <http://www.wida.us/index.aspx>.

The amount of ELD/ESL instructional time will vary depending on factors such as the amount of literacy the student has in their first language, the current grade level assignment and the student’s level of English language proficiency as determined by the WIDA MODEL initial assessment tool or WIDA ACCESS for ELs test (See Figures C and G). The WIDA MODEL/ACCESS test measures language across the four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and across the following content areas: social and instructional English, language arts, math, science, and social studies.

**Figure G. WIDA MODEL/SCREENER/ACCESS English Proficient Levels 1.0 to 6.0**

Level	Name	Description
1.0	Entering	Knows and uses minimal social language and minimal academic language with visual and graphic support.
2.0	Beginning	Knows and uses some social English and general academic language with visual and graphic support.
3.0	Developing	Knows and uses social English and some specific academic language with visual and graphic support.
4.0	Expanding	Knows and uses social English and some technical academic language.
5.0	Bridging	Knows and uses social English and academic language working with modified grade level material.
6.0	Reaching	Knows and uses social English and academic language comparable to native English speakers.

There are many factors to consider when determining ELD/ESL instructional time for ELs. The main goals of ELD/ESL instruction in each grade span are:

- Grade Span K                      Oral language development connected to early literacy development
- Grade Span 1-2                    Oral language development, literacy development, grade-level content vocabulary, and content area knowledge
- Grade Span 3-5                    Oral language development, literacy development, grade-level content vocabulary, and content area knowledge
- Grade Span 6-8                    Oral language development, literacy development, grade-level content vocabulary, and content area knowledge
- Grade Span 9-12                   Oral language development, literacy development, grade-level content vocabulary, and content area knowledge

ELs are expected to meet the same challenging state academic achievement standards as their mainstream peers, therefore schools must assure that ELs have access to core instruction.

The curriculum in each English Language Education Program model is aligned to the state common core

curriculum and the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards (See Figure H). The WIDA ELD Standards represent the social, instructional, and academic language that students need to engage with their peers, educators, and the curriculum in schools.

**Figure H. WIDA English Language Development Standards**

<b>Standard</b>		<b>Abbreviation</b>
ELD Standard 1	English Learners <b>communicate</b> for <b>Social and Instructional</b> purposes within the school setting	Social and Instructional Language
ELD Standard 2	English Learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Language Arts</b>	The language of Language Arts
ELD Standard 3	English Learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Mathematics</b>	The language of Mathematics
ELD Standard 4	English Learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Science</b>	The language of Science
ELD Standard 5	English Learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Social Studies</b>	The Language of Social Studies

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**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Materials, resources and instructional facilities for ELs must be comparable to those available for English Learners. The general/local fund must supply ESL staff with the materials that they need to provide a core language instruction program. Additional materials to supplement the core may be purchased with Title III or other supplemental funds (supplement not supplant clause).

**FULL PARTICIPATION IN ALL ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

It is the responsibility of all schools to include ELs and ELs with special needs in all academic and non-academic activities offered by the school. The selection criteria for participation in an educational program either during school or after school, must permit full participation of the ELs. Schools must provide ELs with language support as needed.

Similarly, full participation of all non-academic programs and extracurricular activities must be open for all students regardless of the status of their English proficiency and schools must provide language support to make the activities comprehensible for ELs, including students with special needs.

Schools need to educate parents of ELs to encourage their children to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities (sports, music, drama, art, etc.) that might not have traditionally been offered in schools of their countries of origin.

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**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Determining special needs placement for students in the ELE Program is a complex process. There may be a number of individual or combined factors determining why language minority students are achieving little academic progress over time. The normal process of second language acquisition, the acculturation process, different learning styles, motivation to learn, or the student’s lack of prior schooling are a number of potential factors instead of intrinsic learning problems. These factors need to be taken into consideration before a child is referred to Special Education.

When considering the needs of ELs and culturally diverse students, the following general guidelines should be considered through the general education intervention, assessment, and program process:

1. Lack of proficiency and skills in English does not in itself make students eligible for special education.
2. An individual who lacks English language skills is different from an individual with a language disorder.
3. Oral fluency in English is not a true indication of the overall English language skills necessary for academic success.
4. Students may be eligible for both EL and special education services if the students have been appropriately assessed.
5. There is no such thing as a "culture fair" or "culture-free" test.
6. All tests given in English are tests of English language proficiency, regardless of their content.
7. Learning styles are determined on an individual basis and by the culture of the students.
8. Culturally-based behaviors may appear to suggest special education needs.
9. Parents of ELs and culturally diverse students may have a different perception of school from parents of traditional English proficient students.
10. Parents and family members of all ethnic groups have valuable information about the students to share when planning an appropriate educational plan.

**Dually identified EL/special education students have a right to receive and must receive English Language Development instruction.**

**ACCOMMODATIONS, MODIFICATIONS AND LOOK FORS**

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In addition to receiving English language support, English Learners that meet the criteria are also eligible for any and all support services provided by the Lowell Public Schools including but not limited to Special Education and Title I.

Specific accommodations, modifications, direct services and English language education look fors (See Figures I and J) will be decided on individual basis. English Learners will be taught to the same academic standards and curriculum as non-EL and will have the same opportunity to access the full range of PreK-12 programs and curriculum.

**Figure I. Accommodations and Modifications**

Accommodations	Modifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Concrete example</li> <li>● Extended completion</li> <li>● Highlighted text</li> <li>● Individual or small group instruction</li> <li>● Manipulatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Alternatives grading scale</li> <li>● Alternative tests and assessments (This could include EL (materials)</li> <li>● Alternative text and materials</li> <li>● Change of percentage correct or completed reflected in grade</li> <li>● Grading on effort</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple forms of communication</li> <li>• Preview lessons/materials</li> <li>• Prioritize lessons/materials</li> <li>• Simplified directions</li> <li>• Study guides</li> <li>• Word banks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modified expectations in written language and/or English mechanics.</li> <li>• Paraphrased texts</li> <li>• Pre-copy of test</li> <li>• Project or demonstration rather than report or test grades</li> <li>• Retaking of tests</li> <li>• Shortened spelling lists</li> </ul>
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**Figure J. English Language Education Look Fors for Students, Teachers and Administrators**

<b>ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION LOOK FORS</b>	
<b>STUDENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in hands-on activities</li> <li>• Talk often and interacting with peers</li> <li>• Participate in cooperative learning tasks that actively involve authentic communication between students of varying language proficiencies</li> <li>• Use graphic organizers to take notes and record information</li> <li>• Access information from a variety of sources not just a single textbook</li> <li>• Able to show or explain how what they are doing relates to the big ideas of instruction</li> <li>• Show their understanding of the concepts through demonstration, speech, drawing, and the written word</li> <li>• Use media and technology to support their learning</li> <li>• Able to use their native language to make sense of the instruction</li> </ul>
<b>TEACHERS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a variety of strategies and modalities to teach, focusing on the big ideas of instruction</li> <li>• Assign peers, mentors, and buddies to allow for maximum student participation</li> <li>• Group and regroup students across the day or class period</li> <li>• Use pictures, models, graphs, diagrams, charts, graphic organizers, etc. to organize information and to elicit student talk</li> <li>• Talk about what is on the walls and showing students how to make use of the information</li> <li>• Inform students of the language and content objectives of the lesson</li> <li>• Elicit students' background knowledge about the topic</li> <li>• Help students connect what they know in one language to their learning in the other</li> <li>• Give ELs time to work on aspects of academic language both orally and in writing</li> <li>• Value students' ability to use two languages</li> <li>• Place more emphasis on students' understanding of the big ideas from content area instruction and less on how they express that knowledge</li> <li>• Model language for students and allowing them to practice expressing academic concepts in English</li> <li>• Use CAN DO Descriptors and ACCESS results to inform/guide instruction</li> <li>• Use WIDA Model Performance Indicators (MPIs) to describe a specific level of English language proficiency for a language domain when creating a unit or a lesson plan</li> <li>• ESL licensed</li> <li>• SEI Endorsed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education</li> </ul>

English Language Education Program Guidelines (Grades PreK-12)

<p><b>ASSESSMENT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CAN DO Descriptors are used to document students’ developing proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and understanding of content</li> <li>● Different assessments are used to measure language proficiency and academic knowledge</li> <li>● Assessments allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the content through a variety of modalities beyond paper and pencil tests</li> <li>● Teachers observe students interacting informally across different settings</li> </ul>
<p><b>CLASSROOM</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is apparent what students are learning from what’s on the walls and student work is evident</li> <li>● Questions and statements are used to label the room and the work displayed and to invite interaction</li> <li>● The entire classroom is a resource for students in their independent work</li> <li>● Materials that acknowledge students’ cultures/languages are visible on the walls and in the reading materials</li> <li>● Visual images, gestures, and realia are visibly connected to the big ideas in all content areas</li> <li>● Materials are available on every topic at a range of reading levels and complexity</li> <li>● Language Experience texts have been developed with input from the learners regarding content</li> <li>● There are obvious connections between the big ideas from the content areas and what students are reading and writing</li> <li>● Parents and community members are in the room or it is evident that they are welcome there</li> </ul>
<p><b>PLANNING FOR INSTRUCTION</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use a standards based approach that focuses on what students should know and what they should be able to do with the information as a result of instruction</li> <li>● Collaborate across settings to review common assessments and set goals for students</li> <li>● Work in grade level or departmental teams to plan</li> <li>● Discuss how to connect big ideas and themes from the content areas to what students read and write during other parts of their day</li> <li>● Have identified all the second language learners in their classrooms and are familiar with their differing stages of language proficiency</li> <li>● Identify which features of language, i.e. grammar, functions, and vocabulary will require additional instruction</li> <li>● Plan together for how to group and regroup students across the school day along different dimensions – language proficiency, literacy level, interests and areas of expertise</li> <li>● Coordinate their schedule with other grade level or department teachers so that it is possible to group students across classrooms for specialized opportunities</li> <li>● Identify multiple avenues for students to learn about, interact with and display their knowledge about the topics of instruction</li> <li>● Identify common visual images to use across contexts to purposely interconnect what students are learning across their day in any language</li> <li>● Communicate regularly with family members and encourage them to interact and communicate with their children in their strongest language (usually not English)</li> </ul>

**ASSESSMENTS OF ENGLISH LEARNERS**

Federal and state laws require that ELs be assessed annually to measure their proficiency in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as the progress they are making in learning English (See Figure K).

**Figure K. Assessment Requirements of English Learners**

<b>State Mandated Annual Assessment</b>	<b>School-Based Assessments</b>
<p>All ELs regardless of their program placement are assessed annually using the following state-mandated assessments:</p> <p><b>Accessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State (ACCESS)</b> Federal and state laws require that English language learner (EL) students in grades K-12 be assessed annually (January-February) to measure their proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking English, as well as the progress they are making in learning English. In fulfillment of these laws, ELs, including students with special needs are required to participate in ACCESS for ELs tests.</p> <p><b>The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)</b> All ELs in grades 3-12, including students with special needs must participate in MCAS tests scheduled for their grade regardless of the number of years they have been in the U.S. However, ELs in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools are exempted from the MCAS ELA at the discretion of their school. ELs are allowed to use an approved bilingual word-to-word dictionary on all MCAS tests.</p>	<p>In order to determine ELs’ progress for advancement, reclassification, monitoring, and other purposes, individual schools may administer additional assessments, such as:</p> <p><b>English Language Arts and Literacy</b></p> <p>Grades K-6 Scholastic Reading Inventory Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) GRADE Test, Grades 5-8 Development Reading Assessment (DRA) Portfolios, benchmark tests, and classroom tests</p> <p><b>Mathematics</b></p> <p>Grades 3-8 Galileo Benchmark Assessments Portfolios, benchmark tests, and classroom tests</p>

**ADVANCEMENT TO THE INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCE LEVEL**

Intermediate/Advance Level refers to the first step in a student’s journey from being a non-English speaker to becoming more proficient in English. This achievement results in a formal program change (See Figure L).

**Figure L. Advancement Guidelines**

<b>ADVANCEMENT GUIDELINES</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="220 1560 1300 1619">1. The Advancement to the Intermediate/Advance Level will be coordinated by the Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment or designee.</li> <li data-bbox="220 1625 1446 1684">2. The LAT will review the Advancement Criteria found in the Advancement to the Intermediate Level Form (Attachment N) and the student’s documents.</li> </ol> <p data-bbox="362 1717 1393 1814">It is recommended that the LAT advance a student from the Newcomer Status (semi-beginner) to the Intermediate Level, only if the student has received the minimum rating “3.0” in all components of ACCESS.</p>



3. The Advancement to the Intermediate Level will take place at the end of the school year for the following school year. Additionally, students can be advanced mid-year, if appropriate.
4. After determining which students to consider for Advancement to the Intermediate Level, the LAT will apply the Advancement Criteria to each student's performance and progress. The measures to assess readiness will be recorded on the Advancement to the Intermediate Level Form.
5. The original Advancement to the Intermediate Level Form will be placed in the student's yellow folder within the cumulative folder.
6. If a student does not meet the Advancement Criteria, the LAT will recommend the appropriate ELD/ESL instruction/supports to help the student continue to develop his or her English language proficiency.
7. Advancement requires no code changes in Aspen X2.

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### RECLASSIFICATION

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Reclassification refers to a formal change in the student's English proficiency status that must be changed in Aspen X2. Once the LAT has determined that a student meets all the conditions of the Reclassification Criteria, the student's EL Status is changed to the status of a Formerly English Learner (FEL).

To qualify for exiting from the ELE Program, the scores achieved on the ACCESS must meet a minimum level in each of the following areas:

- A. ACCESS for ELs: At at least an overall score of 4.2 and a composite score of 3.9 on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0.
- B. Demonstrate the ability to perform ordinary class work in English, as indicated by more than one of the measures listed below:
  - Scores on locally-administered reading and other academic assessments, such as Fountas & Pinnell, I-Ready, DIBELS, GRADE, and/or other locally-administered diagnostic language assessments
  - Academic grades
  - Written observations and recommendations documented by the student's classroom teachers
  - Performance on MCAS content area tests

These ELs will have demonstrated their ability to:

- A. Understand and speak English in relation to the full range of demands of the classroom and the academic language need to succeed.
- B. Read, write and comprehend English as evidenced by successful classroom performance and standardized achievement tests.
- C. Meet or exceed district guidelines in their academic subjects.

After evaluating the available student data, the school-based team should determine whether there is sufficient evidence of the student's English language proficiency and that the student is able to perform ordinary classroom work in English without additional support.

If there is such evidence, the district must:

- Reclassify the students as Formerly English Learner (i.e., proficient in English) and change the student's coding as EL on the SIMS data collection (SIMS: DOE 25 – record 00 under “EL”). Typically, this decision will be made in time for the October SIMS data collection

- Notify parents/guardians of the student’s reclassification.
- Update all school/district records.
- Design and implement a process for routine monitoring of students' academic progress for two years.
- Assign reclassified students, at least initially, to teachers qualified to teach ELs and licensed in the appropriate content area(s). Although not required, this will enhance the likelihood of continued growth in their English language proficiency and content learning.
- Provide additional opportunities for small group instruction and learning throughout the school day, as well as after school and during the summer.

If a Formerly English Learner (FEL) fails to make academic progress after reclassification, as measured by grades and assessments; and if a school-based team familiar with the student determines that this failure is due to lack of English proficiency, the student must be reclassified as EL and the instructional programming redesigned consistent with the reclassification guidelines (See Figure M).

**Figure M. Reclassification Guidelines**

<b>RECLASSIFICATION GUIDELINES</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Reclassification process will be coordinated by the Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment or designee.</li> <li>2. The Reclassification Criteria (Attachment M and M Sped) and the Student Performance results will be reviewed by the LAT. If the student meets the Reclassification Criteria, the student will be reclassified. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is recommended that the LAT reclassify a student if she/he obtained at least an overall score of 4.2 .0 and a composite literacy score of 3.9 on ACCESS for ELLs.</li> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to perform ordinary class work in English, as indicated by more than one of the measures listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Scores on locally-administered reading and other academic assessments, such as Fountas &amp; Pinnell, I-Ready, DIBELS, GRADE, and/or other locally-administered diagnostic language assessments</li> <li>➤ Academic grades</li> <li>➤ Written observations and recommendations documented by the student's classroom teachers</li> <li>➤ Performance on MCAS content area tests</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It is recommended that a child designated as EL in Grade K or 1 continue to be designated as EL in Second Grade, so that more substantial data on achievement in reading will be available when making the decision to reclassify a young EL as English proficient.</li> <li>• Except in extraordinary cases, students in grades 4 and 8 should not be reclassified. The Reclassification decision should be left to the receiving school.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Reclassification of ELs may take place twice a year (beginning of year and mid-year). Reclassification Form(s) may be submitted to the ELE Department at the end of September, end of January and end of May.</li> <li>4. A student without an ACCESS test results <b>cannot</b> be reclassified.</li> <li>5. Special education students are reclassified on a case by case basis.</li> <li>6. After determining which students to consider for Reclassification, the LAT will apply the Reclassification Criteria to each student’s performance and progress. The measures to assess readiness will be recorded on the Reclassification Form.</li> <li>7. The original Reclassification Form will be placed in the student’s yellow folder within the cumulative folder.</li> <li>8. If a student does not meet the Reclassification Criteria, the LAT will recommend appropriate ESL and/or EL supports to help the student continue to develop his or her English language proficiency.</li> </ol>

9. When a student is reclassified from the status of EL to the status of FEL, the LAT will notify the student, send his/her parents/guardians the Parent Notification of Student Exiting from the English Language Education Program (Attachment J) and inform teachers of the student.
10. The ESL Lead Teacher will also inform the English Language Education Department of the student's change of EL Status to ensure that the student's data in the district's student management database, Aspen X2, identifies the student as a FEL.

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### **MONITORING AFTER RECLASSIFICATION**

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Pursuant to G.L. c. 71A and Title III, district will monitor the academic progress of Formerly English Learner (FEL) students for four years following their reclassification from the status of EL to the status of FEL (See Figure N).

**Figure N. Monitoring Guidelines**

#### **MONITORING GUIDELINES**

1. The monitoring process will be coordinated by the Chief Academic Officer and/or designee and the Principal or Department Head.
2. Monitoring FEL students will be a continuous process, beginning immediately upon reclassification and continuing during the four-year monitoring period.
3. Monitoring will be conducted by the LAT.
4. The LAT will gather evidence of student work and examine, analyze, and assess it. This will occur in **January** and **May** of each year during the four-year monitoring period.
5. The original FEL Monitoring Form (Attachment L) will be placed in the cumulative folder.
  - The school-based LAT monitors the progress of the students who have been reclassified. Depending on the students' academic performance, the LAT can modify the amount and the nature of the ESL support provided by an ESL Tutor or other means to meet students' needs.
  - The LAT can change the status of a reclassified student from the status of a Formerly English Learner (FEL) student back to the status of an EL after reviewing the student's classroom performance.
6. A student's status can be re-designated as EL, if the FEL student does not make significant and measurable academic progress after being monitored for at least two report card quarters, and the LAT determines that this is due to lack English proficiency.
  - If a FEL student is re-designated as an EL, that EL will be educated in accordance with G.L. c. 71A. The Language Assessment Team will recommend the appropriate ESL and/or EL supports to help the student continue to develop his or her English language proficiency.
  - The FEL Monitoring Form completed at the meeting is placed in the student's cumulative folder.
  - If a student is re-designated as an EL, the LAT will notify the student, the parents/guardians and teachers.
  - The ESL Lead teacher will enter the student into the school's Reclassification Database and add "Re-designated EL" into the Re-designated column.

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### **MONITORING OF "OPT-OUT" STUDENTS**

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Pursuant to G.L. c. 71A and Title III, district will monitor the academic progress of "opted-out" students, assess their progress in English listening, speaking, reading and writing, and reclassify them once they meet the criteria for reclassification (See Figure O).

**Figure O. Guidelines for Monitoring of “Opt-Out” Students**

GUIDELINES FOR MONITORING OF “OPT-OUT” STUDENTS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Annually, the school-based LAT monitors the progress of “opted-out” students and records their findings on the “Opt-Out” Student Monitoring Form (Attachment K).</li><li>2. The LAT will contact the parent/guardian of the students who are unable to perform ordinary class work in English.</li><li>3. After meeting the Criteria for Reclassification, the “opted-out” students will be reclassified and monitored for two years.</li></ol>

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### STUDENT RECORDS

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Each school will maintain the records for all ELs in their building. EL’s records include:

- Home language survey
- Results of identification and proficiency tests and evaluations including ACCESS for ELLs and MCAS
- Information about student’s previous school experiences
- Copies of parent notification letters, progress reports, and report cards (in native language if necessary)
- Evidence of follow-up monitoring (if applicable)
- Documentation of a parent’s consent to “opt-out” of English language education (if applicable)

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### PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND TRANSLATIONS

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Due to school-based management, schools are encouraged to recruit parents/guardians of English Learners for English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC), all parent involvement activities including open houses, parent meetings about various topics, extracurricular activities, and field trips.

Written communications are sent home in Spanish, Portuguese and Khmer and other languages, when applicable.

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### BENCHMARK REQUIREMENTS

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The English language proficiency benchmarks will inform instruction of ELs and strengthen their learning outcomes. The MA DESE will annually determine the English language proficiency benchmarks for individual ELs and provide them to each district every fall. Meeting benchmarks means that an EL is on track to attain English proficiency within six years of entering a Massachusetts public school. The MA DESE will define and disseminate to districts each fall the English language proficiency benchmarks, or individual targets, for each student’s annual progress toward English proficiency.

The LOOK Act establishes the following requirements for districts:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Adopt procedures to identify ELs who do not meet English proficiency benchmarks;</li><li>● Establish a process for the district to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➢ identify the areas in which identified ELs need improvement and establish personalized goals for attaining English proficiency;</li><li>➢ assess and track the progress of ELs who did not meet benchmarks in the identified areas in need of improvement;</li><li>➢ review resources and services available to assist ELs in the identified areas in need of improvement; and</li><li>➢ incorporate input from the parents or legal guardian<sup>9</sup> of the identified EL<sup>10</sup>.</li></ul></li></ul> |
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English Learner Student Success Plan template is available via Google spreadsheet for ESL Lead teachers and/or ESL teachers to complete for students who are not meeting the annual target.

**TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

Commonly used terms and acronyms associated with English language learners:

ACCESS for ELLs	Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State (ACCESS) measures English language skills necessary for functioning in classes conducted in English annually.
ELD	English language development – a methodology through which the development of language and academic content skills are promoted simultaneously and may utilize native language for clarification purposes.
EL	English Learner; refers to the student.
ESL	English as a Second Language; generally refers to programs that teach English to students who speak another language in the home.
FEL	Formerly English Learner (Reclassified EL).
Home Language	Language spoken by the family.
Language Dominance	The language in which a person is most fluent or most comfortable. Dominance can be determined through testing. It is not unusual to have one language dominant in certain situations and the other language dominant in another.
Low Incidence	Fewer than twenty EL students of one language group.
Native Language	First language of the learner.
Newcomer Program	Newcomer programs are separate, relatively self-contained educational interventions designed to meet the academic and transitional needs of newly arrived immigrants. Typically, students attend these programs before they enter more traditional interventions (e.g., English language development programs or mainstream classrooms with supplemental ESL instruction).
Primary Language	Dominant language of the learner.
SEI	Sheltered English Immersion – a program model whereby instruction and materials are in English and utilizes sheltered instruction techniques.
Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL)	A multi-faceted state-wide initiative launched by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2012 to strengthen teaching and learning of English language learners in Massachusetts. A core component of RETELL was the adoption of standards, inclusive of subject matter knowledge and skills, which incumbent educators of ELs and prospective educators must meet to earn a credential referred to as an <i>SEI endorsement</i> . As of July 1, 2016, a core academic teacher who is assigned to teach an EL must have an SEI Endorsement or must obtain one within a year of the assignment. Similarly, no principal/assistant principal, or supervisor/director can supervise or evaluate a core academic teacher of an EL unless the administrator holds an SEI Administrator Endorsement or will obtain one within one year of the start of the supervision or evaluation. 603 CMR 7.15(9)(b); 603 CMR 14.07(3) and (4).
SLIFE	Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education.

<sup>9</sup> The term “parent” means “parent or legal guardian” throughout this document.

<sup>10</sup> [G.L.c. 71A, § 11.](#)

WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards	An English language proficiency standards framework developed by the WIDA consortium and composed of five standards that represent the social, instructional, and academic language that students need to engage with peers, educators, and the curriculum in schools.
WIDA MODEL	Initial identification/placement assessment for newly registered students.

**REFERENCES AND RESOURCES**

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The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s *Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement and Reclassification of English Learners* (January 2019).

- <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B2XsPfXTDUxhOE5aU2J2NXF0Mk0> - LPS ELE Hub
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/mcu/>
- [https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/Website/State%20Pages/Massachusetts/MA\\_Collaboration\\_Tool\\_GUI\\_DE.pdf](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/Website/State%20Pages/Massachusetts/MA_Collaboration_Tool_GUI_DE.pdf)
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/guidance/default.html>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/resources/id-assess-place-reclass.html>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/guidance/?section=resource-guide>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/guidance/>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/resources/>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/instruction/>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/slife/>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/disability.html>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/look-act.html>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/families/>
- <http://www.wida.us>
- <http://www.tesol.org>
- <http://www.matsol.org>
- <https://www.colorincolorado.org/>

**APPENDICES: FORMS AND TRANSLATIONS IN SPANISH, KHMER AND PORTUGUESE AND OTHER LOW INCIDENT LANGUAGES**

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1. WIDA ELD Standards (Attachment A)
2. Language Background and Educational History Survey Gr. PK-8 (Attachment B1)
3. Language Background and Educational History Survey Gr. 9-12 (Attachment B2)
4. Parent Notification of Student Placement in the English Language Education Program and Translations (Attachment C)
5. Waiver Application Form for Students Under 10 Years of Age (Attachment D)
6. Waiver Letter of 250 words (Attachment E)
7. Parent or Guardian Informed Consent Form (Attachment F)
8. Waiver Application Form for Students 10 Years of Age or Older (Attachment G)
9. “Opt-Out Form” and Translations (Attachment H)
10. School Assignment Letter and Translations (Attachment I)
11. Parent Notification of Student Exiting from the English Language Education Program and Translations (Attachment J)
12. “Opted-out” Student Monitoring Form (Attachment K)
13. FEL Student Monitoring Form (Attachment L)
14. Reclassification Form (Attachment M and M Sped)

WIDA ELD Standards<sup>11</sup> (Attachment A)

**The English Language Proficiency Standards and their Abbreviations**

Standard		Abbreviation
English Language Proficiency Standard 1	English language learners <b>communicate</b> for <b>Social and Instructional</b> purposes within the school setting	Social and Instructional <b>language</b>
English Language Proficiency Standard 2	English language learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Language Arts</b>	The <b>language</b> of Language Arts
English Language Proficiency Standard 3	English language learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Mathematics</b>	The <b>language</b> of Mathematics
English Language Proficiency Standard 4	English language learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Science</b>	The <b>language</b> of Science
English Language Proficiency Standard 5	English language learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Social Studies</b>	The <b>language</b> of Social Studies

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.wida.us/standards/Resource\\_Guide\\_web.pdf](https://www.wida.us/standards/Resource_Guide_web.pdf)